

Developing AJN Network: Transforming Information A Cost Effective Information Resource

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Introduction

Since September of 1993 the American Journal of Nursing Company has been developing a computer network that will provide a variety of formal and informal continuing education services to nurses in medically underserved communities. *AJN Network* went "live" in March 1994 with the support of a Special Projects Grant from the Division of Nursing, Department of Health and Human Services. Using a train the trainer approach, over 150 trainers were oriented in rural areas of our pilot states: North Carolina, Nevada and Wisconsin. This core group has trained over 3000 nurses on the system.

Discussion

During the first year of operation, *AJN Network* was available through a dial in service. In January 1994 an Internet node was installed making *AJN Network* available via an international network that links hundreds of smaller computer networks throughout the world. This project will make use of the High Performance Computing and Communications (HPCC) initiative which provides a backbone extending across the country, capable of transmitting data at tremendous speeds.

Services that are currently available on *AJN Network*:

- CE credit offerings in text and computer-assisted instructions format
- Patient information on various topics
- National and international news related to health care
- A nurse consultant feature where users can post questions and receive responses

- Resource databases: listings of nursing organizations, continuing education conferences, certification requirements of specialty organizations and licensure and CE requirements of State Boards of Nursing
- A Virtual Conference Center where users can read abstracts of conference presentations and post messages and questions for the presenters
- Forums where current topics or clinical issues can be discussed by all network users.

In addition to Forums focused on medical/surgical, maternal-child health, gerontological, obstetric and mental health/psychiatric nursing, there are Forums dedicated to emergency nursing, HIV/AIDS, administration/management, technology, cultural diversity and rural health. Additional Forum topics are established based on user request. Future plans include a CE game. A World-Wide Web site is already under development.

Access to *AJN Network*

If you have access to a computer, modem and phone line, we invite you to browse *AJN Network*. Telnet to ajn.org (198.185.157.24) or dial 212-582-8137 and log in as NEW. There are no charges, but those dialing from outside the 212 area code will pay for the long distance phone call. We can provide 800-access to anyone interested in becoming involved in content development, moderating a forum, or researching any aspect of development. Call 212-582-8820 to discuss your ideas. Ask for Project Coordinator Karen DuBois, MSN, RNC at extension 241, or Project Director Mary Anne Rizzolo, EdD, RN at extension 541.